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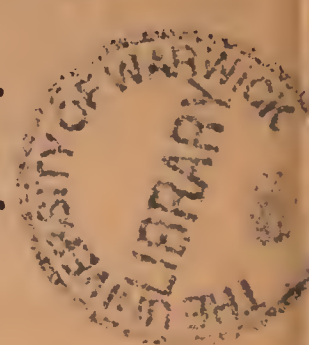
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B A N D I T.

AN ORIGINAL CHARADE, WRITTEN EXPRESSLY FOR
DRAWING-ROOM ACTING.

BY MARGARET HELMORE.



Miss Narrowby.—“ OH, DEAR—OH, DEAR ! HOW DREADFUL ! ”

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ROSE VIVIAN (A young heiress).
MISS NARROWBY } (Her friends).
BERTHA GREY }
MR. WINTER (Guardian to Rose).
SIR ALFRED LEICESTER.

BANDIT.

THE FIRST SYLLABLE.—*Band.*

SCENE.—*Sitting-room in an hotel at Messina. MISS NARROWBY and BERTHA discovered.*

Ber. If I understand rightly, the conditions of the will oblige poor Rose to marry within six weeks of her coming of age.

Miss N. It is so. But although her late uncle expressed a wish that her husband should be his ward, Sir Alfred Leicester, she does not lose her fortune if she prefers taking someone else. The universe has been in existence upwards of five thousand years, and yet to-day, in what is termed "an age of civilization and progress," woman still holds the same lowly and degraded position that she occupied in the days of our common ancestress, Eve. That is the substance of a lecture that I propose to deliver at the next "Trampled Treasures' Tea and Tactics' Meeting," after we get back to England.

Enter ROSE.

Rose. Good morning, my dear friends. At last we are alone, all three of us together. I am sure you have thought me very crazy during the last few weeks; and you especially, Harriet, are at a loss to think what my reason was for asking you to give up the pleasant society at Mentone to join me in this out-of-the-way island.

Miss N. I confess that I cannot conceive why you found it impossible to carry out your scheme in some locality less remote from civilization.

Rose. I will explain. When first I made your acquaintance, when Bertha and I were still girls at school, we three entered into a solemn league and covenant for the suppression of men. Your motives for hating the other sex you did not think it necessary to communicate; my own reason is obvious enough. A tiresome will binds me to marry, whether I like it or not, or else I should find myself thrown penniless upon the world. The sex that produces anything capable of devising a thing like that is deserving of contempt and loathing. I used to think I would relinquish the fortune, and keep my self-respect and liberty.

Miss N. And let your money go to supply a vapid male creature's frivolities—cigars, horses, stalls at the Gaiety, &c.?

Rose. (*Laughing.*) The dread of poverty, and a desire of outwitting our general enemy—*Man*—have inspired me with a grand idea! Now give me your hands, and swear allegiance to me. I have told Mr. Winter my intention, and he, being a lawyer, will arrange everything in proper legal form, so that I can comply with my uncle's injunction, and yet not be troubled with a husband.

Ber. But I do not understand!

Rose. Let me finish. We are here, away from everyone who knows us. We live quietly, so that it is not known at present that I am very rich. Mr. Winter speaks Italian like a native, and he has undertaken to get hold of some needy inhabitant of the place, who will be bribed to marry me! He will sign a paper swearing never to molest me, or try to find out my name, or where I live, or anything. The sum of money I shall give will be an enormous fortune for a Sicilian, so you see I shall benefit—

Miss N. (*Sharply.*) Don't talk of benefiting any *man*, my love!

Rose. Ah! no—horrid wretches! But wealth, after all, is a doubtful blessing. Perhaps the possession of a large sum of money may prove anything but an advantage to my victim; is that a consolation to you? But what do you think of my plan?

Ber. It is a capital idea, only I feel rather nervous about it.

Miss N. It is simply grand, and we will help you to carry it out with all the energy of our faithful hearts.

Rose. That is charming! I knew I should meet with sympathy from you both. What a triumph to think that—

“We few, we happy few, we band of sisters,”

can frustrate the base and degrading designs of the opposite sex!

Ber. (*Drily.*) The odds are in our favour, though. We are three against one; and one in his grave, too.

Rose. Ah! I must not boast too much. Moreover, we have a *man* leagued with us; that is very humiliating.

Ber. (*Enthusiastically.*) But Mr. Winter is not like other men!

Miss N. Ah, no, indeed! Still, he requires keeping in his proper place. (*Aside.*) She thinks a great deal too much of Mr. Winter.

Ber. Well, I'm sure! I do not think *you* have any right to talk like that, when—

Miss N. What! Do you mean to insinuate—

Ber. I insinuate nothing. I—

Rose. Now, my dears, don't be so huffy!

(*The scene closes as all three are talking at once, and squabbling.*)

SECOND SYLLABLE.—It.

Enter ALFRED.

Al. I suppose it is all right. Winter said in his letter that he would meet me here when the ladies were out of the way. I hate this absurd plotting and masquerading; but all's fair in love and war. We have a contest here, in which it is hard to say whether Mars or Cupid is the best general to follow. I am not fighting Rose with her own weapons. She makes no secret of her manœuvre, whereas *I*, the should-be superior, am underhand and deceitful, like a woman! I have half a mind to throw up the whole business and go back to England without seeing her. No; that would be folly. I must see her, and talk to her once more.

Enter MR. WINTER.

Oh! my dear fellow, I am so glad to see you! How are you?

Mr. W. Delighted that you have arrived. Things are much as they were when I wrote to you. Miss Vivian is firm in her resolution about this unnatural foreign marriage, and her ridiculous friends back her up in it. There rests my greatest hope. They are so hot about it, that their ardour must wear itself out, and by the time it comes to the point, and the young lady finds herself about to be tied for life to a villanous-looking, garlic-eating *pescatore ignobile*, when she might marry you, she will be in a beautifully humbled state of mind.

Al. You are very complimentary, but I am not conceited enough to feel at all sure that she will fall in love with me—with her strong-minded notions and contempt for the opposite sex.

Mr. W. Nonsense, my dear boy! She is influenced by the others—at least, the elder lady. As long as she has no suspicion as to who you are, she is bound to like you. But, tell me, for I do not quite understand. You say you have once spoken to her?

Al. Three months ago, knowing that she would soon come of age, and must decide whether she would marry or resign her fortune, a fancy seized me that I should like to see the wife my late guardian had designed for me. I went down to her place in Kent, and looked at her in church on Sunday. I admired her very much, and wished that I had never heard of her strong-minded notions. I made no effort, however, to make her acquaintance, but an odd chance threw her in my way. I was driving to the station the following morning, and, as you know, it is a long distance, and through very narrow, bad roads. The people at the village inn had given me a very ramshackle sort of vehicle, and before we were half-way, off came one of the wheels. The mud was ankle-deep, and I was contemplating a most disagreeable walk, and the prospect of having to wait a couple of hours at the station, for it was certain I should miss the train I was making for. In the midst of this dilemma, who should appear upon the scene, but my wayward, strong-minded “Destiny,” driving herself in a small pony-carriage. My trap occupied nearly the whole width of the road, and

there was barely room for Miss Vivian to pass. Seeing what had happened, the sweet little thing behaved in a most unaffected, natural, and truly charitable manner. Recognising the fly, and so surmising that I was a traveller—possibly a commercial one—she offered to take me to the station! Imagine my delight! I spent the pleasantest half-hour I have ever known. Not one symptom of strong-mindedness did she display; she was simply an unaffected, charming woman, who had acted on the impulse of the moment. But I see a glimpse of a white dress in the garden, and such is the natural vanity and frivolous disposition of “the inferior being,” that it would like to make some change in its travel-worn appearance before meeting the object of its fond desires. Will you come with me to my room, and we can settle our plot a little more perfectly? *[Exeunt Sir Alfred and Mr. Winter.]*

Enter MISS NARROWBY and BERTHA.

Ber. I doubt if we are right in encouraging this scheme. The idea is not in accordance with the prosaic notions of the nineteenth century.

Miss N. Don't you think so? This is an age in which the great deity in all classes of society is £ s. d. A fortune of a hundred thousand pounds is at stake. An inferior being would rest content with the conditions attached to its possession—would accept the money with gratitude, and the encumbrance with resignation. A high-flown, romantic person would scatter both the fortune and its humiliating condition to the winds. Rose, being endowed with some common sense, and having superior friends and advisers, is determined not to lose her fortune, and to make the encumbrance as little noticeable as possible.

Enter MR. WINTER.

Good morning, Mr. Winter.

Mr. W. Good morning, ladies. I am going to beg to be excused from breakfasting with you, as a business acquaintance has just arrived, who expects a little attention from me—a member of the despised sex, so I dare not hope to be allowed to present him to you.

Miss N. and Ber. (Much interested.) A gentleman?

Mr. W. Yes. But where is Miss Vivian? I trust she has not wandered beyond the grounds of the hotel. *(Uneasily.)* English people, especially ladies, little think what a risk they incur in going about alone in places like Sicily. There are constantly cases in the newspapers of travellers losing their way—

Miss N. Good Heavens! You alarm me! I am so used to Rosa going about by herself! Oh, what shall I do? Careless wretch that I have been! She came to my room, and asked me to go out with her, and I refused! Oh, oh!

Ber. She knocked at my door, too, and I pretended to be asleep. Oh, selfish brute that I am!

Miss N. Where can she be? Let us alarm the hotel, and send scouts in all directions. I have heard of people being taken prisoners by brigands, and cut up into little pieces, and sent bit by bit to their relations, till a ransom was paid. There was an English wine merchant, whose nose—

Mr. W. (Looking out of window.) Do not alarm yourself; I see Miss Vivian in the garden, with all her features uninjured.

Enter ROSE and SIR ALFRED, talking.

Rose. Oh, my dears, is it not strange? This gentleman and I have just recognised each other; we met one day in England. Mr. Winter and he are acquainted, I find. Mr. Winter, will you please be master of ceremonies, and present your friend to us? For although he and I are on speaking terms, you see, oddly enough, we do not know each other's names.

Mr. W. (Aside to Alfred.) What shall I call you?

Al. Hush! I'll manage. Madam, your kindness in acknowledging any acquaintance with me is a favour I feel most deeply. Will you pardon me if, for the present, I ask to keep my name secret?

Miss N. (Aside.) What insolent assurance! The creature must be a felon!

Rose. Oh, I beg pardon. Of course, it doesn't matter. Any friend of Mr. Winter's must be welcome to us. Please do not think me rude and inquisitive.

Miss N. (To Bertha.) It is only natural to wish to know how to address anyone with whom one may have to come in contact.

Ber. We can speak of him as "The Mystery," or "L'Inconnu," or simply "It."
(Rose and Alfred have retired to the back of the stage in animated conversation. Mr. Winter takes papers from his pocket, and appears absorbed in their contents.)

Miss N. This is what I have dreaded! My friend, my pet pupil falls away from all the noble resolutions she has made. This "thing" already proves capable of destroying all the influence I thought I had acquired!

(Scene closes.)

THIRD SCENE—*Bandit.*

Night.

Enter SIR ALFRED and MR. WINTER at opposite sides. Sir A. carries a large cloak over his arm, a brigand's hat, with coloured ribbons, and a false beard.

Mr. W. So far, so good. My humiliated victim is at the door, under the charge of our excellent accomplices, Luigi and Beppo. She imagines that I, in the same predicament as herself, am being conducted, blindfold, to treat with the bandit chief about our ransom. What have you done with the others?

Al. Thanks to the darkness of the night, my ruse of making them believe they were being driven miles into the country succeeded admirably. The poor things are trembling with terror in the carriage, not a hundred yards from the garden entrance, and think that I am being taken by the vetturino to the presence of the same hypothetical personage as yourself. We ought not to lose any time. If you are pretty sure of your part of the trick, I think I may answer for mine.

Mr. W. Oh, my dupe is in a fit state for anything. I doubt if her strong mind will ever recover the shock of this evening. But we have too much light here; a sombre gloom will be more impressive. Besides, Miss Narrowby must think at first that she is in some robber's den.

Al. Will Rose ever forgive this? We have only been two days together, and yet I cannot be wrong in believing that she likes me. Will she loathe and despise me when she finds herself caught in her own toils? A few minutes will decide now.

(Retires into a corner.)

Enter MR. WINTER, leading MISS NARROWBY, blindfold.

Miss N. Oh, dear—oh, dear! How dreadful! How silly of us to think of a picnic in a horrible country like this! Shall we ever get back to the hotel? Oh, are those wretches with the odious smell of mouldy sheepskin near me?

Mr. W. No; they are waiting without, guarding the entrance. But it would be as well to speak politely about them. They do not understand English; but their chief does, and we are in his presence.

Miss N. Then I hope he can speak so that one can comprehend him. No educated person could be expected to understand this dreadful patois. *Signore il brigadiere, voglio—*

Mr. W. Hush! He is under a vow not to speak until his terms are complied with, and Rose promises to be his wife. You must urge her to remain firm in her resolution. Really, this adventure comes quite opportunely. I must leave you now for a moment, whilst I meet the young ladies.

Miss N. Oh, when once I get out of this, I never will leave the civilized world again! However, if Rose marries this bandit, she will be safe from the intrigues of this dangerous stranger, who has taken her fancy so absurdly.

Al. Aha!

Miss N. *(Starting.)* Good heavens! somebody there! Oh, this hateful bandage! I declare, it is a mercy I did not forget my promise and tear it off, for the cave is so silent I thought I was alone! I might have been stabbed to the heart!

Al. *E vero, Signora!*

Miss N. Oh, good Lord! He does understand English, then! But how about your vow of silence, sir?

Al. *(Aside.)* Hang it! *(Aloud.)* *Io non sono il Capitano, sono un altro. Corpo di Bacco!*

Miss N. *(Aside.)* Uses bad language, the villain! But I can understand him. Ah, thank goodness, I hear them coming!

Enter MR. WINTER, ROSE, and BERTHA.

Rose. (To Miss N.) Oh, you poor dear thing! Mr. Winter, why have they treated her like this?

Miss N. My dear, I don't mind the bandage now I know you are safe. But do let us make haste and comply with the b—— the Signor's terms. Sign his paper, and then to-morrow we can go to the Consulate and have the marriage hurried over, and get away from this hateful country for ever!

Ber. You see, dear, it turns out quite conveniently for your scheme. Only who would have dreamed of there being spies about who could understand what we said?

Rose. (Aside.) Oh, what shall I do?

Mr. W. Is there any need to delay? You quite understand, do you not, that you are the victim of a plot—that there are traitors about you? In fact, everyone in the hotel is in the pay of yonder gentleman, and it would be dangerous—nay, positively useless—to offer any opposition. Here are the terms of the agreement—(*producing paper*)—‘written in very choice Italian.’ He promises never to molest you, to leave you directly the marriage ceremony is concluded, and never seek to see you unless you desire it. Quite your own terms, you see.

Miss N. Nothing under the circumstances, and in such a country, could be fairer. Oh, darling, sign it, and let us get back to the hotel!

Ber. What do you mean? We are in our own sitting-room. Mr. Winter says it was only a trick to frighten us that we were driven such a roundabout way. Let me untie that handkerchief.

Miss N. No, no! I shall be stabbed! Somebody said so! You think to calm me, but I am not to be deceived. I feel the damp, humid air of the robbers' stronghold! Sign, Rose, if there is a pen and ink! But I daresay you will be expected to do it in blood! I believe it is the custom.

Rose. (Aside.) Oh, where is the stranger? He might counsel me.

Ber. Why do you hesitate? You have got to marry someone, you know. Sign!

Rose. I cannot!

Miss N. Do you want us all to be killed?

Mr. W. Do you want to lose your fortune?

Miss N. Are you in love with any MAN?

Rose. I will sign. Let me do it quickly.

(*Mr. Winter produces pen and ink. Rose hurriedly signs her name. Alfred approaches, and writes his signature beside it. Mr. Winter lights the candles, and removes the bandage from Miss Narrowby's eyes. Rose sinks on a seat, and buries her face in her hands.*)

Miss N. What is this? Is this a trick? We really are in our own room! Where are the rest of the villains?

Ber. (Taking up the paper.) A trick, indeed! Look, Rose! Do you see whom you have promised to marry?

Miss N. (Snatching the paper, reads.) “Alfred Leicester!” I see it all! Infamous!

(*Alfred, throwing off disguise, kneels at Rose's side. She screams, and falls into his arms.*)

Al. Forgive me! I loved you so desperately that I could not help trying to save you from the fate you had devised. I will keep my word and leave you directly we are married—unless you bid me stay.

Miss N. The most shameful thing I ever heard of!

Mr. W. Pray forgive us!

Rose. What use is it fighting against fate? Now is ‘the engineer,’ indeed, ‘hoist with her own petard!’ This has been an unfair war. With regard to numbers, we were your superior, and yet two men, two ‘inferior beings,’ have outwitted three women!

Ber. No, Rose; I must confess it. For the last half-hour I have been a traitor.

(*Taking Mr. Winter's arm.*)

Miss N. Treachery, deceit, villany everywhere! I have done with you!

Rose. No; you will relent in time. I have never yet known what it is to feel so happy!

THE SNOW HELPED.

AN ORIGINAL COMEDY, WRITTEN EXPRESSLY FOR
DRAWING-ROOM ACTING.

BY J. REDDING WARE.



Horace.—"I THINK I MAY VENTURE TO BEAR THE LIGHT."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MRS. HOLBIN (Who is fifty, though denying it).

HORACE (Her son, who is twenty-five, and says it).

MR. CAVENDISH (Who is fifty-four, and insists on it).

ADELAIDE (His daughter, who is nineteen, and never thinks of her age).

MR. CLAYTON TORR (Who is thirty-five, and feels twenty).

MRS. CLAYTON TORR (Likewise thirty-five, and feels any age you like to name.
An invalid).

TIME.—*Present.* PLACE.—*Anywhere in England.*

THE SNOW HELPED.

SCENE.—A Drawing-room.

Mrs. Holbin. I quite agree with you, Mr. Cavendish. It is very delightful to have children to care for, and I know of no misery deeper than to be childless; but they are a cause of anxiety. Now, my Horace, for example!

Mr. Cavendish. And my Adelaide!

Mrs. H. I feel that had he had the judicious government of a father all these years it would have been very much better for him.

Mr. C. Exactly my case, my dear Mrs. Holbin. I have said to myself at least a thousand times—and I am sure more—a father may be an admirable father, but he cannot be at the same time an admirable mother.

Mrs. H. Quite my impression. Nature certainly does play some strange gambols. I could have comprehended the arrangement if I had been left a widow with a daughter, while you had been stranded as a widower with a son.

Mr. C. Just so. Only you see it was differently arranged by—by fate. You are a widow with a son; I am a widower with a daughter. It is no use resisting facts—is it?

Mrs. H. No; the question I am asking myself at all times (for I have awoken in the night frequently, and found myself putting the inquiry to myself) is this—have I brought up my Horace fitly? Can a woman properly overlook the life of a boy?

Mr. C. My dear madam, we are as one. I have asked myself—certainly more than nine hundred and ninety-nine times—~~have I judiciously overseen the education and manners of Adelaide?~~ In other words, have I made too much of a man of her?

Mrs. H. Quite my predicament. I frequently reproach myself with the doubt as to whether or not I have made my poor Horace effeminate.

Mr. C. What a pity, my dear madam, we did not meet long since, just after you were a widow.

Mrs. H. Eighteen years since.

Mr. C. And I have been deprived of my wife two years longer than you have felt the loss of your dear departed.

Mrs. H. (*Sentimentally.*) Ah!

Mr. C. (*More sentimentally.*) Oh!

Mrs. H. I was not bad looking when I was young—er.

Mr. C. I was of a very pleasant countenance, my dear madam, until I was old—er.

Mrs. H. You are not even now altogether dilapidated, my dear Mr. Cavendish.

Mr. C. While I am bound to say you are a very well-preserved woman.

Mrs. H. How very close the weather is. Will you open a window?

Mr. C. Certainly. Dear me, who would believe that this is the twenty-fourth of December, and that, in all probability, the turkey is trussed!

Mrs. H. It is most unseasonable weather. I have known it colder in August.

Enter MRS. CLAYTON TORR, very much wrapped up in shawls and comforters, and moaning.

Mrs. C. T. O-o-oh! what dangerous weather! Oh, how dreadful!

Mrs. H. Good morning, Mrs. Torr! How glad I am to see you about.

Mrs. C. T. O-o-oh! what weather! So uncongenial, so unseasonable, and therefore dangerous!

Mr. C. Are you no better, my dear Mrs. Clayton Torr?

Mrs. C. T. O-o-oh! I am not any very much better; but I do not think that I am altogether too very much the worse. Only the dreadful part of it is that there is no knowing what is the matter with me. O-o-oh! *there* lies the agony. I would rather have a fatal complaint, and know it, than live this martyrdom. For it is too awful never to know whether one is quite well, or completely ready for the grave! O-o-oh! wherever are my Spidaculated Drops? I can't find 'em. They must have jerked out of the bottle—for I have got *that*; and what is worse, I have mislaid my Magno-introspective Pilules. O-o-oh! if I only could be certain what was the matter with me!

Mrs. H. Poor martyr!

Mr. C. You bear it so angelically!

Mrs. C. T. I do—I do. I feel I am a great example. Have you seen Mr. Clayton Torr about?

Mr. C. He has not yet returned.

Mrs. C. T. Some day he will be returned—in pieces! Over the hills, down in mines, up in balloons, with a diving-bell now and then! Always looking for it, and never finding it—

Mr. C. Looking for what?

Mrs. C. T. (*Starting.*) Three of my Spidaculated Drops here in the Queen Elizabeth egg-cup! Ha! let me take 'em! (*She does.*)

Mrs. H. Do you feel better?

Mrs. C. T. Not yet.

Mr. C. I hope you will.

Mrs. C. T. Hope tells so many flattering tales! But I must go. I hope you are enjoying our country air here? For my part, I believe it poison! What weather! The ground ought to be white with severe snow. Tell Clayton when he comes in not to turn the house out of window, and not to call upon me until to-morrow morning.

Mrs. H. Shall we not, then, see you at dinner?

Mrs. C. T. Horror! What! after the absorption of three Spidaculated Drops? Fatal ignorance! You will become a victim some day, my dear Mrs. Holbin! No; after *that*, there is nothing for it but a vapour iodide-potass-tart-nux-vomica bath for seven hours, and two hours to follow with horse-hair gloves! Frightful friction! O-o-oh! what a martyr I am!

Mrs. H. and Mr. C. (*In a tone of conviction.*) You are, indeed!

Mrs. C. T. Yes; and don't I bear it like a martyr? After I am gone, tell the world how brave I was, and how I bore goodness knows what complaint with stoical fortitude. Good-bye! I hope we shall meet again. But I must tear myself away, for it is time to endure my Hypogastric Lotional Liniment. O-o-o-oh!

(*She goes out, wrapping herself up more than ever.*)

Mrs. H. Poor woman! If she only was a mother, she would get rid of all these fancies.

Mr. C. Just so; nothing like a progeny for brooming away all selfishness.

Mrs. H. Our dear children.

Mr. C. Ah! Mrs. Holbin—if they could but love. But don't you think it is colder?

Mrs. H. Much; there will be a change in the weather. Here comes Clayton Torr.

Enter MR. CLAYTON TORR, carrying a lump of rock, two large fossil shells, a speckled dead cat, three old brambles, and a rose.

Mr. C. T. Good day, both of you. How have you been getting on all the morning? So glad to have invited you down here to make each other's acquaintance. Hope your son and daughter will like each other, and make a match of it—and why not you two, too? Have both marriages at one altar and one time. Be married from here—do. It would make quite a paragraph in my county history. What splendid weather; have been quite enjoying myself. Have done twenty-five miles, and called on seventeen people.

Mrs. H. What a lovely rose!

Mr. C. (*Pointing to the cat.*) Had sport, I see.

Mr. C. T. Rose? Yes, Mrs. Holbin, and actually growing in the open air. Wonderful season! Delightful. Smell it—do. Cat?—no, the rose. Animal—no, not sport. The fact is, found it dead—victim to a cart-wheel. But look at it—do. Did you ever see such marking? Skin and send to Darwin. No doubt he will have seven chapters about it.

Mr. C. But what is that lump of rock?

Mr. C. T. Lump of rock? Look—do. It is primitive trap, and I verily believe a foot-mark, plain. Robinson Crusoe nothing to it. Shall send it to the Geologic Museum in London. Perhaps I shall get knighted. Bless me! what a Lady Clayton Torr my unfortunate wife will make. Have you seen her to-day?

Mr. C. Yes; she was on view for a few moments.

Mr. C. T. Suffering?

Mrs. H. Poor dear, a martyrdom; and now, I believe, bearing with a bath.

Mr. C. T. Do you know what's the matter with her? No? Too much health.

Mr. C. But what are those shells and those bits of stick?

Mr. C. T. The bits of stick, as you call them, are my secret. I *think* they ought to get me a peerage. Real science. As for those two fossil shells, they are a triumph of a find.

Mrs. H. They look very dirty?

Mr. C. And very much like any other fossil shells.

Mr. C. T. My boy, they are turned the wrong way. Freak of nature—like a squint, you know, or one eye blue and the other nobody can tell what colour. Sell for a thousand times what they would fetch if they turned the *right* way. Certainly I shall be talked about at the Institution in Albemarle Street. What with my two shells, my primitive trap, and my three antediluvian human teeth—

Mr. C. Ah! but where are the teeth?

Mrs. H. Pray don't show me the ugly things!

Mr. C. T. Oh, *that* was my yesterday's find. I put them for the moment in that treasure of mine in old china, the Queen Elizabeth egg-cup. (*Goes to egg-cup.*) Ha! they are gone. My invaluable three antediluvian human teeth!

Mrs. H. (*Suddenly jerking.*) Horror! Mrs. Clayton Torr has taken them!

Mr. C. T. Bother the woman—to her room?

Mr. C. (*Pointing to his mouth.*) Here!—here!

Mr. C. T. Oh, nonsense, they would not fit; besides, she has her dentist.

Mrs. H. (*Shuddering.*) My dear Mr. Clayton Torr, bear the news with as much resignation as possible. She has taken them *DOWN*. We saw her do it.

Mr. C. Thought they were some kind of medical acid drop she had lost. She had no difficulty with them whatever.

Mr. C. T. Good; depend upon it she has as bad as swallowed my peerage. Well—well; it is one consolation that she has got something the matter with her at last. Indigestion it certainly will be. My three beautiful antediluvian teeth gone in a moment! Well, what kind of a day have you had?

Mrs. H. We have been deploring that my son has no father to guide him, and—

Mr. C. My daughter no mother to advise.

Mr. C. T. Matrimonially mix, and all will be arranged. Do you think the young people will agree to the altar?

Mrs. H. Alas! my son is so smooth and elegant that I fear Miss Cavendish must despise him. How cold it is turning. There will be a change in the weather.

Mr. C. And I am sure Mr. Horace completely despises my dashing daughter. Decidedly the weather is changing. I think I will button up my coat.

Mr. C. T. Well, I am ready for any change. Everything in this world is perfectly delightful, and equally exquisite. I do hope your young people will make one of it, and you another, married from here—and quite a paragraph for my county history.

Mrs. C. T. (*Off—and wailingly.*) Oh, where are they?—where are they?

Enter MRS. CLAYTON TORR.

Mrs. C. T. Where are they?—where are they? (*Looking about.*) My Machicolated Lozenges—sweet solaces—where are you?

Mr. C. T. Where are my antediluvian teeth, woman? Are you aware, lost one,

that you have swallowed three of 'em in mistake for some of your medicated messes?

Mrs. C. T. What! not my Spidaculated Drops? (*Smiling.*) Teeth! Ha! I feel a gnawing at last. So there is something wrong with me. Oh! never mind my Machicolated Lozenges now. Come, Clayton—come and watch my agony!

(*Moving off.*)

Mrs. H. and Mr. C. Poor, poor martyr!

Mr. C. T. The best thing she can do is to mix everything and take it continually.

Mrs. C. T. I think I will—I do think I will.

[*Exeunt Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Torr.*]

Mrs. H. (*In a tone of conviction.*) What a house!

Mr. C. Admirable man—estimable woman, no doubt. But as you say, “What a house!”

Adelaide. (*Without.*) Tally-ho-ho-ho!

Mr. C. Here is my adored tom-boy.

Enter ADELAIDE, in riding habit.

Adelaide. Good afternoon, papa. Day, Mrs. H. Stunning run with the hounds. Came up with them, at Blotteringly Shrubbery. All blue. No find. At last broke cover, and away we went due north, round by Deadman's Land, and over the stone hedges. Bad spills; one woman a cropper, that I should say will last her a month well. Bad bit of water; old Squire Bramble tasted it. Did it on his head. Beast went to cover again, and not even a cat to comfort ourselves with. Had lunch—don't know where. “Hi!” says the old fellow; “will you feed?” “Won't I?” says I; and I put myself outside two delectish platefuls of not bad pie. Good sherry, too, papa, I can tell you. *Doocid* good sherry!

Mrs. H. Hus-s-s-sh, my dear!

Adelaide. Anybody asleep? Sorry, I am sure. But it was *DOOCID* good sherry!

Mr. C. Oh, misery—misery—misery and shame!

Adelaide. What's the shame, and where's the misery, papa? Hanged if I can see either. And so I have had a highly jolly day, and feel spanking.

Mrs. H. Hus-s-s-sh, my DEAR!

Adelaide. What, somebody else asleep?

Mr. C. Oh, agony—torture—rack—thumbscrew—scavenger's daughter—and gout!

Adelaide. All at once, papa! What a dose!

Mr. C. Not such a dose as you are, darling.

Mrs. H. Dear girl; but why not tone yourself down a shade or two?

Adelaide. Dear me! Am I a bit fast? I had no idea of it.

Horace. (*Without, and singing.*) Take back the heart that thou gavest—what is my—my—Bother the song, how does it go? What is my anguish to thee? Take back—take back the—hum—hum—you promised—leaving the—hum—hum—to me.

Enter HORACE, wearing mittens, blue spectacles, galoches, a comforter, and carrying a book.

Horace. Dearest mamma, good afternoon! Admirable Mr. Cavendish, I salute you, I do!

Mrs. H. (*Low to Mr. C.*) You see he started as he saw her. Pity—pity—pity!

Mr. C. (*Low to Mrs. H.*) He did, and she jerked. Sorrow—sorrow—sorrow!

Mrs. H. Will they ever love?

Mr. C. If they do, it will be another queer house established.

Mrs. C. T. (*Without.*) Parkins, Parkins, be quick with the Isoscelated Soap! Bring three hot Comminated Towels, and do NOT forget the Damped Dessicated Bran! Quick! or who knows what the consequences may not be!

Mrs. H. Poor Parkins!

Mr. C. I wonder what Parkins does when she gets a holiday?

Mrs. H. Perhaps she doctors herself. But let us steal away, and leave the young people to themselves. Perhaps they will smile at last.

Mr. C. Yes; let us steal away. *How very cold it has turned.*

[*Exit Mrs. Holbir and Mr. Cavendish.*]

Horace. (*Removing his Spectacles.*) I think I may venture to bear the light. (*Sings.*) "Take back the heart that thou ga——"

Adelaide. (*Singing, and beating her riding habit with her riding whip.*) "With a yo-ho-tantivy—tantivy—tantivy—tantivy!"

Horace. (*Singing.*) "—vest; what is my ang——"

Adelaide. "Tantivy—tantivy—tantivy!"

Horace. (*Singing.*) "—uish to me? Take back the—the—hum—hum——"

Adelaide. (*Singing.*) "Hark and away, as breaks the day—tantivy—tantivy—tantivy!"

Horace. "Leaving the—hum—hum—to me-e-e-e." (*Speaks.*) Beautiful song, to be sure. So touching. I think I may venture to take off my comforter. There! Now, as to galoches. A very delicate question is galoches. Miss Cavendish, will you allow me to take off my galoches in your presence?

Adelaide. Take off anything—take off anything. Been reading?

Horace. The divine works of Doctor Tupper. Do you ever indulge in Tupper?

Adelaide. Never. A treat to come. Is he very spicy?

Horace. I will take a proverbial at random. (*Opens book, and reads.*) "He who sitteth himself upon a thistle raiseth himself quicklier." How very true.

Adelaide. Most. I suppose, as it is growing colder, you will keep on your mittens?

Horace. Dearest mamma insists. Indeed, dearest mamma insists a good deal. It is getting colder.

Adelaide. Well, my papa is not bad at insisting.

Horace. You have been riding, Miss Adelaide, I believe?

Adelaide. Yes, Mr. Horace. I hope you do not find anything too awfully improper in a saddle?

Horace. Dearest mamma would never allow me to ride—except a donkey, and then she superintended. This beast of a galoché won't come off.

Adelaide. Let me help.

Horace. Oh! I couldn't let——

Adelaide. High bosh! Keep your leg out—one, two, three! There you are, you see. Now the other; keep your leg out—one, two, three! There you are again! Now, we will just kick 'em into a corner, and one poor heart will be at rest.

Horace. I hate galoches, Miss Adelaide, but dearest mamma insists. In fact, I admit, once more, that she does insist a very great deal.

Adelaide. Papa has his way considerably.

Horace. I think I'll take these beastly mittens off. The fact is, I hate being muffled up—only dearest mamma does so insist.

Adelaide. You see, you should have been a daughter, and I am sure I ought to have been a son. Pap, in fact, has brought me up as though I were a boy, and now I do believe that he is ashamed of me. How can I help it, if my first present was a pony, and my second a riding habit? Pap made me row him before I was ten, and I can swim like a duck, although I don't mind admitting that I am still a little bit afraid of the water.

Horace. How lucky you have been!

(*The snow begins to fall, and is seen through the windows.*)

Adelaide. Well, that depends as to how you look at it. All I know is, that I upset the women awfully, and they look upon me as quite a lost sheep.

Horace. Ha! it is the men I cannot get on with. They laugh at me, but not so much as they did before I knocked Tom Huff down.

Adelaide. (*Excitedly.*) Is it possible? Did you really knock down a real man?

Horace. I was forced to, you see; but I was ashamed of it, though it has always been a comfort to me that Tom Huff was bigger than myself. I apologized immediately; but, you see, he went down all the same.

Adelaide. Is it possible? Knocked down a real man!

Horace. Why, Miss Cavendish, you are talking like a woman.

Adelaide. And you—you are talking just like a proper, real man. So you tumbled the gentleman over? Why? Do tell me all about it.

Horace. Oh, there is nothing to tell! There was a bet that Tom would pull my

nose, and that I would put up with it. Only, somehow, when it came to the push, I did NOT put up with it. Indeed, Tom hurt his back dreadfully.

Adelaide. No, no; you hurt his back.

Horace. Do not reproach me, Miss Cavendish. I am aware that it was the act of a brute.

Adelaide. Reproach you! The act of a brute! It was noble! You see, with your blue spectacles, and your mittens, and your galoches, you do NOT look like a Hercules.

Horace. Dearest mamma! She will so much insist.

Adelaide. Like papa! I am sure I would often sooner be at home, puddling about, than streaming all over the country. But I am papa's; and, of course, every man has a right to do as he likes with his own. (*Goes up.*) Ha! it is snowing.

Horace. (*Goes up.*) So it is. How delightful!

Mrs. C. T. (Off.) Parkins, tell the cook carefully to mix the isinglass, and Robert skim gelatine—with the double essence of compressed beef, simmer for a week, and then come up for further orders.

Voice. (Sharply.) Yessem!

Adelaide. (Coming down.) How I do love the snow!

Horace. So do I. Shall I tell you something? In spite of dearest mamma, I am awfully fond of riding and driving, and, above all, sleighing. Have you ever been in a sledge?

Adelaide. No. Is it jolly?

Horace. Stunning! You shoot over the snow like lightning! And, in spite of dearest mamma, I have a sledge—a beauty—I bought of a Russian gentleman.

Adelaide. How I should like to see it! ~~How the snow is peppering down!~~

Horace. It is not far away. I had it brought down here secretly, and—and I have been waiting for that beastly soft weather to give over, and for the snow to fall, in order to have a spin. My Canadian horse can go over the snow sixteen an hour.

Adelaide. Isn't it dangerous?

Horace. No! But surely you don't think of danger?

Adelaide. I do. I'm always half afraid in the saddle. I think I was born to be quite a home-bird, only, somehow, papa has made a lot of mistakes. No, I am not as brave as I look and talk, Horace Holbin.

Horace. I am glad of it, for I hate a regular rattling woman. Mind, I like her a bit plucky, but not all pluck.

Adelaide. Quite so. For instance, I should not be afraid of your splendid sledge.

Horace. (Looking through window.) How it is peppering down! Another ten minutes of it, and the sledge would go like lightning. And I've had my Canadian horse roughed in readiness. No; I am not altogether the cad I look.

Adelaide. No. Think of Tom Huff! And do you like Doctor Tupper's works?

Horace. Hate 'em!

Adelaide. Then why quote?

Horace. Dearest mamma! Favourite poet.

Adelaide. And the galoches?

Horace. Dearest mamma!

Adelaide. And the spectacles, and the mittens?

Horace. Dearest mamma!

Adelaide. Oh, delightful! Pray shake hands! Do let me apologize for supposing that you were a milksop!

Horace. And I am sure I beg yours for assuming you were a mere stable party!

Adelaide. Don't tell pap—but I can knit stockings—silk stockings.

Horace. I am ravished with delight!

Adelaide. Then, as a peace-offering, I will knit you a pair, and begin this very evening, the moment papa's eyes are off me.

Horace. Shake hands again! And how I do wish you would have a spin with me in my sledge!

Adelaide. You promise to take care of me?

THE SNOW HELPED.

Horace. On the honour of a man!

Adelaide. Oh, I cannot resist that promise! Consider it a bargain. Dear me, how it is snowing!

Mrs. C. T. (Off.) Parkins!

(Voice. Yessem!

Mrs. C. T. Why will you keep out of my room? Tell cook to make me a hygienic pancake, now the snow is falling, and to be sure and use plenty of Anti-dyspeptic Pepper.

(Voice. Yessem!

Horace. Do shake hands, Miss Cavendish!

(Horace and Adelaide laugh.)

Adelaide. With great pleasure, Mr. Holbin!

(A jingling of bells is heard.)

Horace. There is my sledge! My man has brought it round, and he is waiting for me. If you were not here, I should not be able to resist.

Adelaide. Do not resist.

Horace. But you?

Adelaide. Oh, I'm coming, too! I never break my word! I am sufficiently brave to keep any promise I may happen to make. Ha! here is your dearest mamma's jacket. That will do for me. Help me. (She puts on jacket, helped by Horace.) I can't go in my hunting chimney-pot, can I? Here is papa's smoking cap! Help me put it on at a proper angle. (Horace sets the cap on her head, and coquettishly.) Do I look well in it?

Horace. Just fit for a sledge!

Adelaide. And you? Ha! here is Mr. Clayton-Torr's plaid shawl. Oh, I know how to put it on in the Scotch fashion. Let me do it. (She puts plaid on Horace after the Scotch fashion.) Oh! I have trodden on the blue spectacles!

Horace. Never mind. I hate 'em! (Kicks the volume of Tupper.) There goes Tupper into a corner. By Jove! you do know how to put on a plaid. Where's my Glengarry? Ha! here in my pocket. There! it is on. There are fur gloves and rugs in the sledge. You look capital, Adelaide Cavendish—just fit for a sledge!

Adelaide. Do I, Horace Holbin? I am sure you look stunning!

Horace. There! do you hear the bells again? Quick, quick! or dearest mamma may drop down on us!

Adelaide. Horror! Quick, quick! Oh, this delicious snow!

Horace. Exquisite! Hurry up!—hurry up!

[They exeunt running, and through the snow. (The bells are heard again, and gradually fade in the distance. Pause.)

Mrs. C. T. (Off.) Parkins!

(Voice. Yessem!

Mrs. C. T. (Off.) Bring me my Koumiss seethed in the real Athol Brose.

(Voice. Yessem!

Mrs. C. T. (Off.) Also bring me my Electrical Brush and my Magnetical Comb, and dress my hair until dinner time. And mind I have plenty of saffron with my chicken. Simmer carefully.

(Voice. Yessem!

Enter MR. CAVENDISH.

Mr. C. I think it ought to be done—I do indeed think that it ought to be achieved. (He goes to the glass.) Dear me! (He starts.) The very determination on my part that it ought to be effected has made me appear older by six years. Let me see—I insist upon it that I am fifty-four, but smile when people say that I am not a day more than forty-five. Nor do I look more than forty-six—as a rule. But this determination on my part makes me look six years older—forty-six and six make fifty-two—fifty-two from fifty-four leave a couple. Ah! then the sum is simple enough. I look just two years younger than I am. Suppose I rub my lips a bit, it may make them look redder. (He does so.) Ha! improvement very evident. (He turns from glass and takes seat on sofa.) I shall be very sure to marry again. The house will be routed inside out. I shall probably have to smoke in the stables, and no dog will be allowed over the threshold. But what is to be done? I shall not be the only father who has sacrificed himself on the alteration of a widow into a wife. It must be done, or I shall have Adelaide running off with a splay-footed

groom, or bestowing her hand and fortune on a bow-legged vet. Heigho! if I had only possessed a son instead of a daughter, how very happy I should have been as a widower! (*Looking left.*) Here she comes! and she quite means it, for she has hoisted three red camelias into her wiggyery.

Enter MRS. HOLBIN (L).

71 Mrs. H. (*To herself.*) He has curled his hair. Strange probable current of sympathetic sacrifice between us. He does not see me. He has taken up a book—"Ovid's Art of Love." I recognise the binding. It is Horace's—dear boy. So devoted to improving his mind with solid and severe Latin. Never will let me even see a translation. Makes him sigh with learning. Ha! the captain—for he is a captain, if only of militia—~~he~~ sighed too! Now I wonder whether that is due to Ovid or hesitation? I must encourage him—not for my sake. No—no—no—no—no! I shall regret much to give up my liberty. I am perfectly certain my white Angora cat would never be allowed on the counterpane, and I have no doubt that I shall have to give up my tame white rat in the drawing-room. But Horace—I must think of Horace. They are beginning to call him Miss Horatia, and if once the dear tenderling hears this calumny—for calumny it is—he might take to hysteria, he is so delicate. And I dare say the captain smokes like a navigator. His boots, too, creak enough to reduce a high-minded woman to complete despair. *But it must be done.* Horace must be stirred up, and in return I will do my best with that volcano of a girl. If she throws me out of window, or scares me to death with her riding-whip, why I shall go down with the comfortable conviction that Horace's guardian will be a man. But why does he not speak? (*Looks at him.*) Certainly Ovid must be interesting. Hem! (*C. takes no notice.*) Hem! (*C. stoops his head over the book.*) Ho! (*She flings over a chair.*) (*C. throws the book over his head.*)

Mr. C. Mrs. Holbin, are you hurt?

Mrs. H. No, Mr. Cavendish, it is all nerves. I do so worry about that boy of mine.

Mr. C. Ha! where is he now?

Mrs. H. I have not made any inquiry, and I am very criminal not to have inquired, but I always order him to lie on his back on the bare boards for one hour after a walk, in order to give tone to the system. And your dear daughter, where is she?

Mr. C. (*Shrugging his shoulders.*) Seeing the weather, I have no doubt that she is amongst the horses, deep in a snow-balling match with all the stable boys on the premises.

Mrs. H. Poor dear friend, how I wish I could console you.

(*She sits down on sofa. They turn their heads away from each other, but each stretches a hand, and after bobbing about the hands meet and wring each other.*)

Mrs. H. Dear sacrificial one!

Mr. C. Sweet suffering angel!

(*Each feels with the free hand for a pocket-handkerchief. Neither can find it.*)

Mrs. C. T. (*Off.*) Parkins, am I to be killed like a martyr of the middle ages? It is more than a quarter of a minute past the time when I am embrocated between the shoulder blades with my Oxygenated Viscidized Tar Soap, which I have been frothing for the last fifty seconds. Come directly!

Voice. Yesssem!

Mr. H. (*Finding his pocket-handkerchief.*) At last! (*He wipes his eyes.*) Trying moment!

Mrs. H. (*Finding her pocket-handkerchief.*) I thought I could not have been so blind as to leave it up-stairs, knowing I should want it when he offered, and I wept. Ha! what is going to happen?

Mr. C. You will excuse a tear?

(*He turns and faces Mrs. H. They keep their hands clasped.*)

Mrs. H. Pardon a tear? I would welcome a dozen.

Mr. C. Suffering creates pity and sympathy.

Mrs. H. It does, indeed, my very dear sir.

Mr. C. Here goes—Mrs. Holbin, as far as my heart can be in my mouth, it is so at present. Need I tell you why?

Mrs. H. (After a pause.) That, my dear sir, is according to circumstances, of which I leave you to be the best judge.

Mr. C. (Shaking his hand.) So clear-headed. My dear madam, may the consideration for my misguided daughter plead for me. Mrs. Holbin, I make you the offer of—

Mrs. C. T. (Screams off.)

Mrs. H. Dear me! Mrs. Clayton Torr, I should say.

Mr. C. Precisely; perhaps it is a mere symptom, and as we are only visitors, I do not think we can rationally interfere.

Mrs. H. Quite so, as you say, only visitors. No interference possible with family arrangements. You were about to say?

Mr. C. My daughter. You know my love for her, and—

Mrs. H. Stop, Mr. Cavendish; before you proceed further, may I venture to urge that any sacrifice you could make for your daughter would be equalled by me in the way of self-inflicted torture in relation to the benefit of my son. Pray proceed; but you will pardon me if I shut my eyes. (She does so.)

Mr. C. (Aside.) Egad! a good idea. As a child you shut your eyes when you take medicine. Why not close your eyelids when about to take a wife? (He shuts his eyes. Their hands are still clasped.) Mrs. Holbin, if my hand trembles it is not with cowardice, but honourable emotion. Mrs. Holbin, I make you the offer of—

Mrs. C. T. (Screams off.)

(Mr. Cavendish and Mrs. Holbin leap from the sofa, separate, and open their eyes.)

Mrs. H. This is, indeed, too much.

Mr. C. What, my offer?

Mrs. H. No; Mrs. Clayton Torr's little remarks. You were about to say?

Mr. C. (Losing his temper.) Upon my word, my good woman, I hardly know what I was going to say; but I beg to remark at once that my daughter is such a nuisance that I should like to pack her up in a nunnery, if it was possible, and leave her there until called for.

Mrs. H. (Mislaying her good humour.) And as for my unfortunate son, who is disarranging all my plans, I—I—I—I—

Mr. C. I quite agree with you.

Mrs. H. And I see no cause for differing from any observation you may or may not have made.

Enter MR. CLAYTON TORR, carrying a large lump of coal, a huge carrot, an old cup, and a ragged mat.

Mr. C. T. Hullo, are you rehearsing anything? Here, look at my treasures. (Showing lump of coal, and pointing.) See here. Once let the scientific men admit that that is a fossil fig-leaf, and the origin of post-diluvian vegetation is thrown back seventy-five millions of years.

Mrs. C. T. (Screams off.)

Mr. C. T. (Taking no notice of screams.) Very startling, is it not? Not a year less, my dear friends. As for this carrot, it speaks for itself.

Mrs. C. T. (Screams off.)

Mr. C. T. Such are the freaks of nature.

(Mrs. Holbin and Mr. Cavendish look L., and show agitation.)

But to turn to art, my dear friends. Actually found this valuable porcelain on a shelf in the coal-hole, undoubted pap-pot of King William and Mary. Worth a mint of money. And now look at this treasure of a mat. Real Teheran-Persian—first chop! More beautiful colour got by age, never witnessed.

Worth endless study. And where do you think I picked it up? (Mrs. Clayton Torr screams off.)

I am not ashamed to tell you—

(Mrs. Clayton Torr screams more loudly.)

Mrs. H. Mr. Clayton Torr, have you no ears?

(Mrs. Clayton Torr screams again.)

Mr. C. (Aside.) Either no ears, or else very long ones.

Mr. C. T. Ears! Yes. What then?

Mrs. H. (*Pointing left.*) Your wife is screaming like—

Mr. C. T. Like an engine throwing off steam. Precisely. The engine throws off superfluous steam, and he is safe. Mrs. Clayton Torr throws off superfluous vitality, and she is preserved. Screaming is her chief exercise.

(Mrs. Clayton Torr screams off, adding, "Ho—ho—ho!")

You see the cure is going on perfectly.

Mr. C. But she said, "Ho—ho—ho!"

Mr. C. T. Very interesting. "Ho—ho—ho!" is new—decidedly new!

(Mr. H. and Mrs. C. approach each other.)

Mrs. H. and Mr. C. (*Low to each other.*) Depend upon it, an asylum!

Mrs. C. T. (*Off.*) Oh, oh! Help! Clayton, Clayton! The Electro-Biologo Hair-Irritator! All my locks standing on end, as though mad!

Mr. C. T. (*Starting.*) How very interesting! She must look like a fretful porcupine. My dear friends, come—come! It will be a perfect treat. Come—come!

[He exits, L., running.]

Mrs. H. and Mr. C. (*Low to each other.*) Quite depend upon it—an asylum!

[They exeunt, L., hurriedly.]

(The tinkling of the sledge-bell is heard in the distance, and becomes louder and louder. Then it suddenly stops.)

(The voices of Adelaide and Horace are heard singing the first bars of Mendelssohn's duet, "~~I would that my love.~~")

Enter ADELAIDE and HORACE.

Adelaide. (*Seating herself.*) Ho! what a delightful drive we have been having!

(She speaks in a womanly voice.)

Horace. (*In a manly voice.*) I am sure I am very glad you have enjoyed it.

Adelaide. You see, I marked you keep your eyes so well on the horse, that I was not in the least afraid. And I am so happy! I am only afraid of one thing.

Horace. And what is that, Addy?

Adelaide. I shall be afraid to speak to my father.

Horace. Shall I speak for you?

Adelaide. I wish you would, Horace.

Horace. (*Coolly.*) All right. You and I have agreed upon it, and if they make any objection—why we had better bolt, you know.

Adelaide. (*Meekly.*) Bolt? (*After a pause.*) Ha!—that would be, run away!

Horace. What a clear head you have, Addy!

Adelaide. Have I? But you won't expect me to be in the saddle much! I never did like horses.

Horace. You shall do just as you like.

Adelaide. But I will go out driving with you whenever you will let me, for I do think you are the coolest whip I ever knew.

Horace. You see, you are timid by nature, and you exaggerate matters. I'll manage the old people.

Adelaide. We shall be so happy—so very happy!

Horace. Ha! I'll see to that!

Mr. C. T. (*Without.*) Nothing could be more remarkable—quite a paragraph for my country history, hair standing out from her poor head like a mop.

Enter, L., MR. CLAYTON TORR, MR. CAVENDISH, and MRS. HOLBIN.

(Horace looks at them, and puts his arm round Adelaide's waist.)

Mrs. H. (*Screaming.*) Horace, forbear!

Mr. C. (*Raising both hands.*) Oh, that fast, slangy girl of mine! She has made him make a fool of himself!

Mr. C. T. Phenomenal!—completely phenomenal!

(Mrs. C. T. *Wiccoughs off*)

Horace. Oh, bother, mother! Adelaide and I are to be married, and I don't

mean to wear any more galoches, and we have been out in my sledge, had a clipping ride, and been to the next town, where we bought something.

Mr. C. (*Low.*) Adelaide has bitten him, evidently. (*Aloud.*) Girl, behave yourself—come away!

Adelaide. (*Meekly.*) If you please, papa, a woman must obey her husband, and Horace has ordered me to stay here. (*Mrs. Clayton Torr hiccoughs off.*)

Mr. C. T. Most phenomenal!

Mrs. H. But—but—but—

Horace. (*Showing his mother a ring on Adelaide's finger.*) See! that is what we bought in the next town—an engagement ring!

Mr. C. But—but—but—how?

Adelaide. The SNOW HELPED, papa.

Horace. Yes; it was cold in the sledge, and we snuggled close for warmth.

Mr. C. T. (*Looking at Adelaide and Horace.*) Incredible! (*Mrs. Clayton Torr, off, sneezes.*)

Mrs. H. Consider all our last conversation as never spoken. I wish to remain free. (*Mrs. H. and Mr. C. go up and meet.*)

Mr. C. Mrs. Holbin, thank you. Shake hands. I have no desire to lose my liberty. (*They come down.*)

Horace. My wife!

Adelaide. My husband!

Mr. C. T. What a tableau! (*Rushes L.*) My dear, my dear, come out! Do your eyes good! Horace and Adelaide are embracing before our very eyes, and say they are going to marry. . Come—come and bless them!

Mrs. Clayton Torr. I can't—I can't, or I would. But from the bottom of my heart and my Bromided-Bichromatic Bath, bubbley-ubbley, bless 'em—bless 'em—bless 'em!

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